Capacity Building: Developing Sustainable International Collaborations

Deadlines
Pre-Proposal: November 01, 2016
Full Proposal (by invitation only): December 15, 2016 (subject to change)

Program Description

The Office of the Vice President for Research (OVPR) announces a funding competition to build capacity in centers and institutes at the University of Minnesota to develop international research collaborations. This competition is in recognition of the substantial coordination that is required to coordinate the development of international collaborations and grant proposals with international partners. A competitive center or institute has an established track record of building collaborations and leading the development of grant proposals, and is ready to engage with organizations to increase international funding opportunities. The maximum number of awards in this competition is one. Amount awarded by OVPR not including required match is expected to range from $50,000 to $75,000 per year for up to two years (subject to availability of funds).

OVPR identified three high-potential geographic areas where investments could significantly broaden the University’s international research collaborations. The three areas are (i) Sub-Saharan Africa: Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, South Africa, and Nigeria; (ii) South-East Asia: Indonesia, Hong Kong, Singapore, and Thailand; and (iii) South America: Argentina, Chile, and Peru. It is expected that a competitive center or institute will make an effort to identify opportunities in the high-potential geographic areas, but efforts need not be limited to these areas. The University is interested in developing collaborations in other countries as well, in particular in the developing world, but decisions on involvement in countries outside of the high-potential geographic areas should be based on the strategic value to the University of collaborating in these countries. It is expected that the effort will result in broad institutional capacity building, including identifying funding opportunities, facilitating proposal preparation, and providing project management support, and not just address a specific research project.

Questions about this competition should be directed to Claudia Neuhauser (neuha001@umn.edu).

Eligibility requirements

- Applications are accepted from University of Minnesota centers and institutes. The center or institute director must serve as the PI on the application. A center or institute may lead only one application, and OVPR centers and institutes are not eligible to serve as the lead center/institute. All University of Minnesota centers and institutes, including those housed in OVPR, may be listed under participating centers/institutes on up to two applications.
- Applications must include a match of 50% of the TOTAL cost, that is, the match is at least equal to the amount requested from OVPR. The match may be shared in any proportion by the collaborating units, but cannot include in-kind contributions.
Selection Criteria (Full Proposal)

- Potential for increasing prominence of international research at the University and fostering additional collaborations consistent with the strategic research plan “Five Years Forward”
- Potential for addressing international funding opportunities
- Explanation for what gap in successfully applying for international funding opportunities will be addressed
- Strategy on how to increase capacity to apply for international funding opportunities
- Past track record in supporting collaborations and grant proposals
- Ability to realize international funding opportunities, including identifying such opportunities
- Explanation of how one year from now, the lead center/institute will have increased capacity as a result of this grant
- Quality of metrics (see Metrics Criteria below)
- Potential for long-term sustainability, including a plan to sustain the activity for three years beyond the initial 2-year funding.

Metrics Criteria (Full Proposal)

Defining Success: All full proposals need to include a section where the proposers define what success means for their project.

Long-term Impact: Since the funding is for a shorter period of time (two years), the benefits may not be realized until years later. Each full proposal must define long-term goals that can be used for evaluation in the ensuing years.

Metrics: Full proposals must include explicit metrics across the following broad categories:
- Accountability (measurable output, additional resources leveraged, dissemination plan, and visibility within the University’s research community)
- Intellectual Merit (expected contributions to the targeted research or scholarly areas, potential for transformative research or scholarship, potential for advancing transdisciplinary partnerships)
- Broader Impacts (potential to benefit society and contribute to the achievement of specific societal outcomes)

Application Requirements

Pre-Proposal

Submit the pre-proposal to facgrant@umn.edu. The pre-proposal must include

- Lead center/institute
- Lead PI name, position, department, e-mail
- co-PI names, positions, departments, e-mails
- Participating centers/institutes
• Summary description of what gap will be addressed, how capacity will be built, what opportunities will be targeted, and past track record.
  o Limit to one single-spaced page prepared in point size of Arial 11pt (or higher) Times New Roman 12pt (or higher) with 1” margins. References are not included in this space limitation but should be kept to a minimum
  o One additional page may be added for figures or images
• Two- or four-page CV of Lead PI (NSF or NIH format)
• Statement that the pre-proposal has been discussed with those who may provide a support letter for matching funds for the full proposal submission if the team is invited.

Pre-proposals will be reviewed and teams with competitive pre-proposals will be invited to submit full proposals.

Full Proposal

• Cover page with
  o Title and non-technical abstract (150 word maximum)
  o Name of lead center or institute and names of supporting centers of institutes (if applicable)
  o Names of PI with affiliation and contact information
  o Names of co-PIs and other key personnel with affiliation(s) and contact information (use additional pages if needed)
• Two- or four-page CVs of PI and co-PIs (NSF or NIH format)
• Proposal description (must address the Selection Criteria)
  o Limit to five single-spaced pages prepared in point size of Arial 11pt (or higher) Times New Roman 12pt (or higher) with 1” margins. References are not included in this space limitation but should be kept to a minimum.
  o One additional page may be added for figures or images.
• Metrics (must address the Metrics Criteria)
  o Limit to two single-spaced pages prepared in point size of Arial 11pt (or higher) Times New Roman 12pt (or higher) with 1” margins.
• Budget and budget justification
• Support letters and letters stating matching fund contributions (each letter is limited to one page; no limit on the number of letters)

Submit full proposal as a single pdf to facgrant@umn.edu.